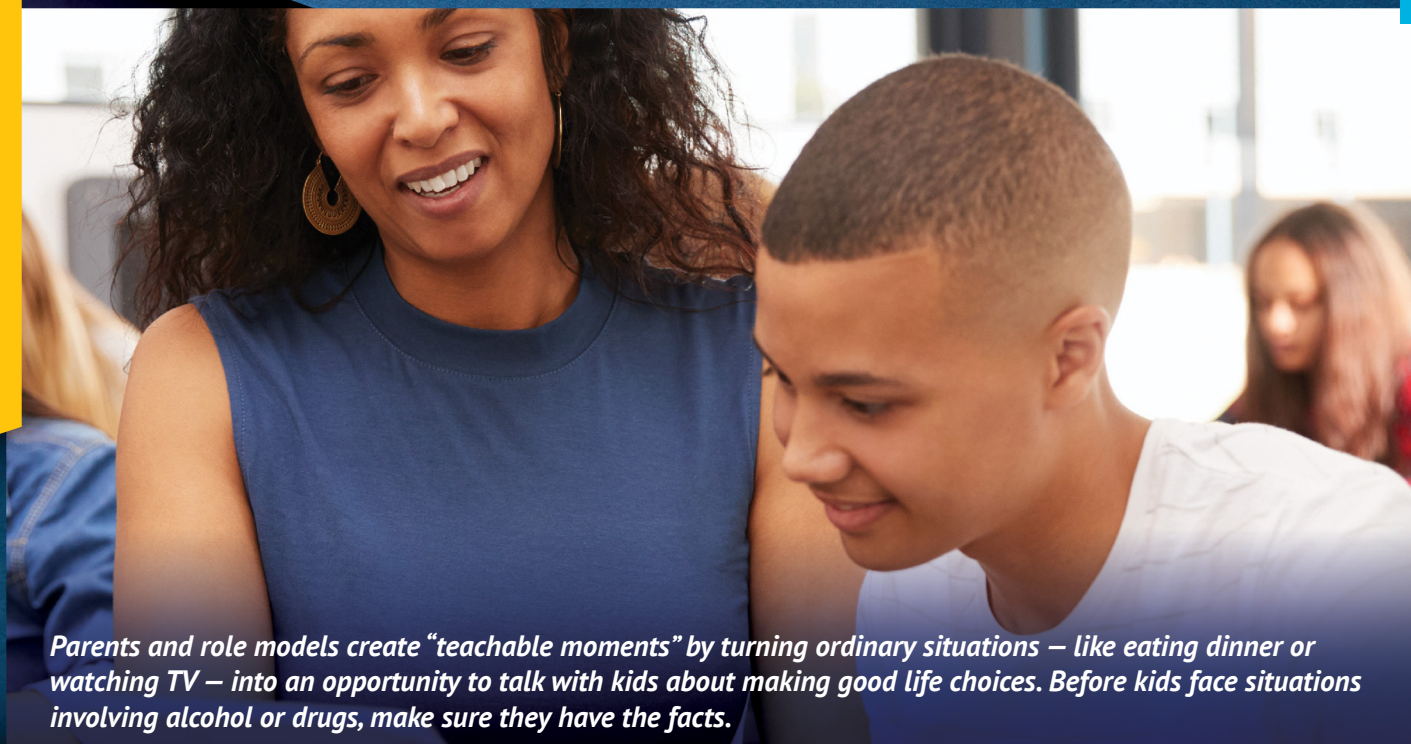


METHAMPHETAMINE



Parents and role models create “teachable moments” by turning ordinary situations — like eating dinner or watching TV — into an opportunity to talk with kids about making good life choices. Before kids face situations involving alcohol or drugs, make sure they have the facts.

Methamphetamine, commonly called meth, is a highly addictive stimulant. An odorless and bitter white powder, it can be taken orally, snorted, smoked or dissolved in water or alcohol and injected. The immediate effect might be joy or excitement but this fades quickly, so users often take many doses in a row, causing a series of highs and lows.

The majority of meth in Texas comes from Mexico, but some is made locally. Most labs use ingredients from cold medication, like ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, along with household chemicals to make the drug.



Street Names:



- Chalk
- Crank
- Croak

- Crypto
- Crystal
- Fire

- Glass
- Ice
- Meth

- Speed
- Tweek

The Effects of Methamphetamine

In addition to the direct effects of the drug, meth use can lead users to engage in risky behaviors such as needle sharing or unsafe sex. Because of this, meth users are at higher risk for contracting HIV, hepatitis B and C, infections of the heart lining and valves, and infections and sores at injection sites.

Immediate effects:

- Sleeplessness
- Loss of appetite
- Nausea, vomiting and diarrhea
- Psychosis, including paranoia, hallucinations and delusions (often feels like insects crawling under the skin)
- Raised body temperature
- Altered judgement and reduced inhibition

Long-term effects:

- Severe weight loss
- Skin sores caused by frequent scratching
- Infections
- Dental issues, such as rotting or decaying teeth (known as “meth mouth”)
- Depression, irritability and anxiety
- Irregular heartbeat, raised blood pressure, stroke, heart attack and seizures
- Permanent damage to brain cells
- For pregnant women, premature labor, detachment of the placenta and low birth-weight babies with possible neurological damage, poor feeding and lethargy

Studies show that chronic users of meth have issues with their dopamine system, which controls motivation, pleasure and motor function. Chronic users might also have severe structural and functional changes in their brain linked to memory and emotion.



Use of Methamphetamine Among Youth

- In 2014, less than 1 percent of students reported using meth at least once.
- In 2016, 1.2 percent of students reported using meth at least once.
- Since 2008, less than 1 percent of students have reported using meth in the past month.

Signs of Use and Getting Help

Common signs of meth use include skin sores caused by scratching, severe weight loss and rotting or decaying teeth. Keep an eye out for any behavior changes that might be signs of drug use (see “*How to Talk to Kids*” to learn more).

If you think your teen is using methamphetamine, talk to them and get help, if needed.

Contact your local Prevention Resource Center to learn more:
hhs.texas.gov/prevention-resource-centers

Sources: 2016 Drug Facts, National Institute on Drug Abuse • 2016 Texas School Survey of Drug and Alcohol Use

The Teachable Moments series provides parents and role models information they can use to talk with kids about substance abuse. To learn more, visit DrugFreeTexas.org.



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